

# Freaky Features

in Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary



Turn the card over to see what it is!

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## Purple Encrusting Sponge

This soft smooth purple sponge lives on rocks in calmer waters and tidepools. Sponges pump water through their body, sifting through it for tiny bits of food. Sponges are simple animals composed of cells organized around a system of pores and canals. They lack both nervous systems and digestive tracts.

## Sand Patterns

Pick up a handful of sand and you'll notice different colors. Sand originates from rocks far away from where you find it on the beach. Dark grains are typically heavier than lighter-grains. When the wind blows or there's an ocean current, sand grains are sorted by size and weight and form interesting patterns. Next time you are beachcombing, look for animal tracks and other strange markings and try and guess their source.

## Sea Cauliflower

Sea cauliflower is a brown algae also called "sea potato." Chlorophyll, green cells that produce food from sunlight, are hidden by gold and yellow pigments. This is a low growing plant often clustered into yellowish dense patches in the intertidal zone. Sea cauliflower is solid when young but becomes hollow as it matures.

## Orangepeel Nudibranch

Nudibranch means "naked gill". This animal is kind of a snail without the shell. The top of the nudibranch is covered with small branching gill tufts that look like feathery knots. If a predator decides to eat the nudibranch, it might be surprised by the stinging cells inside the tufts. The largest nudibranch in the world, the orange peel nudibranch eats hydroids and sponges.